Port Orange, Florida

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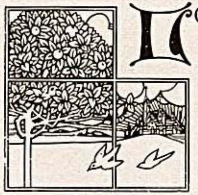
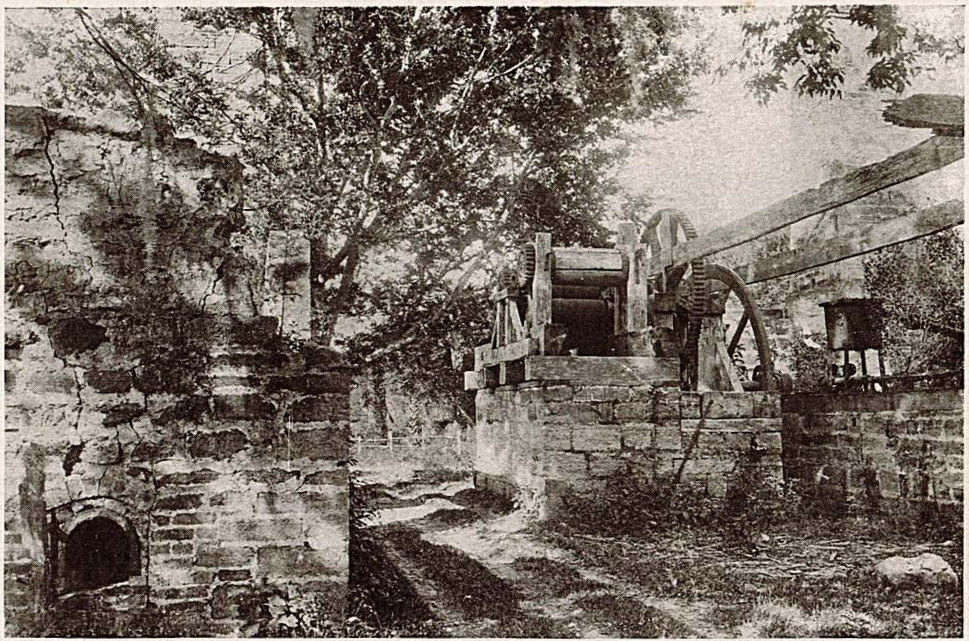
A Place for Health and Home Seekers

Its Past History, Present Condition, Future Prospects Agricultural Resources and Climatic Conditions



LOCATION. Port Orange is located 115 miles south of Jacksonville and on the line of the Florida East Coast Railway. It is five miles south of Daytona and ten miles north of New Smyrna, both noted winter resorts. To the east it faces the broad sweep of the Halifax River, one mile in width, dotted with numerous islands. Opposite is located the Halifax Peninsula, less than half a mile wide, beyond that the Atlantic Ocean with a beach unrivalled in all the world for breadth, cleanliness and hardness of surface. To the west stretch the higher pine lands, capable of producing anything from an onion to an orange.



RUIN OF OLD SPANISH SUGAR MILL

As a Health Resort Port Orange has exceptional advantages. It is absolutely free from all malarial conditions. The water, obtained from artesian wells, is pure and wholesome. With the rest of the Florida East Coast, Port Orange enjoys the sunshine every day in the year, with just sufficient clouds intervening to subdue the fervor of the sunlight. The thermometer seldom reaches above 90 degrees in the shade during the summer. Cooling breezes sweep daily across the river from the boundless stretches of the ocean and permeate the atmosphere with their salty tonic and life sustaining ozone. One can live here constantly an outdoor life without fear of contracting cold or bronchial afflictions. With perhaps a few days now and then, when the thermometer falls a degree or two below the frost line, we have here the balmiest of spring-time temperature during the winter months with roses and lillies abloom. Here is just the place for those who seek health and recuperation, quiet and rest from the strain of metropolitan activity.

A Place for Homeseekers. The population of Port Orange is composed, to a great extent, of northern people, some of them quite wealthy and others who have acquired a competency sufficient to live a quiet and retired life. Among

ENTRANCE TO PORT ORANGE FROM NEW RIVER BRIDGE

the inhabitants are many who constitute the descendants of the earliest settlers who bore the brunt of Indian battles and other frontier discomforts, and laid the foundation of the State of Florida with its present population. The inhabitants constitute a high class of citizenship, orderly, industrious and with a devoutly religious undercurrent, making for temperance and sturdy character building. There is not a saloon in the place. With these social elements in its favor, Port Orange has about it an unlimited area of fine productive land which can easily be brought under cultivation, bringing quick results and good returns. The price of land ranging from $10.00 to $25.00 per acre, according to location, with a steady rise in value.

Past History. The past history of the town is mainly traditional. It seems that the town site and surrounding country to the extent of a 1000 acres were acquired by one Patrick Deane, an officer in the British army, under the title of a Spanish land grant. There are everywhere evidences of former extensive sugar cultivation. Whether this was carried on under Spanish or English occupancy is not now known. About one mile west of the town is the ruin of an old sugar mill with parts of heavy machinery still in place and

SCENES ABOUT PORT ORANGE

solid coquina walls and tall chimneys still standing. Thirty years ago the building covering the site was yet intact. Who built the mill and placed the machinery is not known. It stood there when the oldest settlers arrived. When the Seminoles in 1834 swept the district clean of the white settlers, after one of the most stubborn battles fought during that war, they burned every building and destroyed every plantation, but strangely enough they never disturbed the old mill. The settlers retreating with their families and wounded by way of the river and peninsula, found refuge in St. Augustine.

With the lapse of the Spanish land grant titles Americans entered and settled upon the land. One Dunlawton, from Savannah, Georgia, carried forward the work of sugar cane planting and was succeeded by Mr. J. J. Marshall, of Shreveport, Louisiana, who developed the business on a more extensive scale until Louisiana competition killed the sugar industry in Florida.

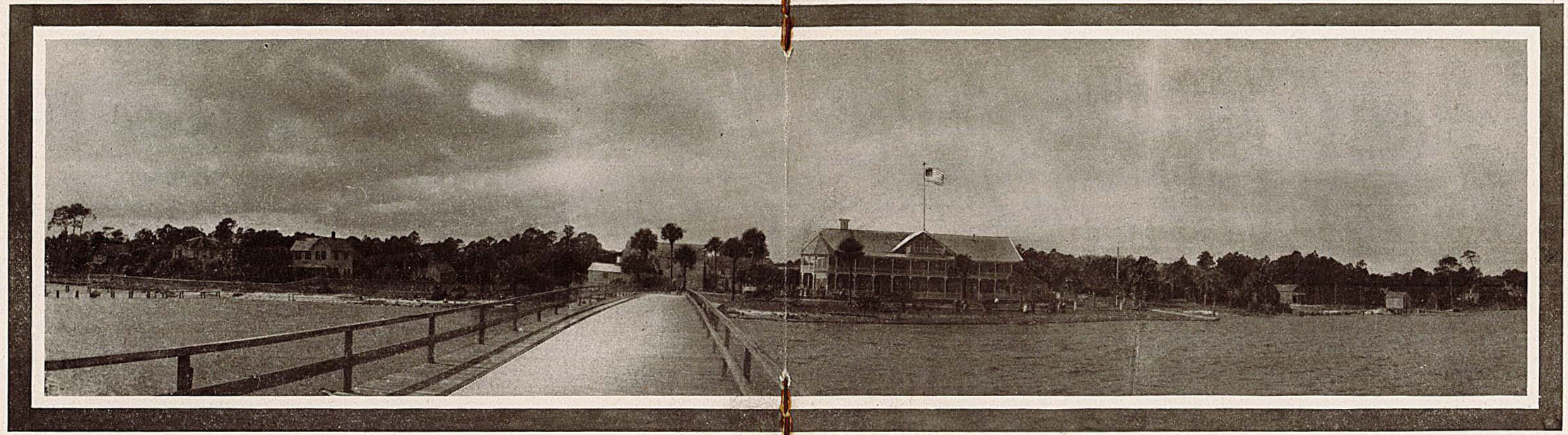
Port Orange Today contains about 500 inhabitants. There are three stores, two hotels, several boarding houses, express, postoffice, telephone and telegraphic service, a boatyard, several small oyster fishing establishments, a railroad station, two churches, a public school, and nearby a tannic acid factory of considerable

SOUTH VIEW OF PORT ORANGE HOUSE

dimensions. The streets as well as the roads leading to the town are made of oyster shells of which the Halifax River and old Indian shell mounds furnish an inexhaustible supply; they constitute a very superior road making material, hard and smooth in all sorts of weather conditions.

During the summer months four trains daily, two south and two north, keep touch with the greater world. During the winter months the train service is doubled, owing to the influx of tourist travel, of which Port Orange gets a well proportioned and steadily increasing share, and quite a number of well-to-do northern people have here their winter homes.

The hotels and boarding houses afford ample accommodations at reasonable prices. The Port Orange House, with Mr. S. Fred. Cummings as proprietor and manager, is of forty rooms capacity with comfortable dining rooms, fine verandas, broad river frontage and nice parkage front and rear. Prices range from $2.00 per day up. The Illinois House, with Mr. D. W. Winn as proprietor, is of twenty rooms capacity. The house is under experienced management and well kept, with prices from $6.00 per week and up. Mrs. F. A. Hardeman and Mrs. Caroline MacDonald, keep each a boarding house where good rooms



Residence Geo F. Lufberry Residence Col. F. W. Roe Store Pattillo & Co. Port Orange House Cottage Homes Beneath Pine and Palms

VIEW OF THE RIVER FRONT, PORT ORANGE, FLORIDA

and board can be had at moderate prices.

Farming can be carried on with profit and for a growing market. There is a steady home demand for fresh vegetables during the winter, with farming on a more extensive scale or by combination of small growers, to ship in quantities, a ready sale can be found in northern markets for Florida grown winter vegetables. Potatoes of a superior quality, peas, lettuce, cabbage, beets, cucumbers, celery, tomatoes, strawberries, cassava, peanuts and other garden truck grow and mature rapidly. The ground, with proper care and fertilizing will produce five and six crops, and more, a year. In fact vegetables can be raised ten months in the year; August and September being the exception.

Fruit Growing. Experience, extending over a period of thirty years, has demonstrated that the finest quality of oranges and grape fruit can be grown on the lands about Port Orange.

The "Freeze" of 1895 gave orange culture in Florida a serious set back. Since then means have been devised to protect the groves against recurring frosts. Orange culture is undoubtedly the most profitable of all fruit growing—requiring the least care with the best results. New groves are springing up

GLIMPSE OF THE RIVER AND NEW BRIDGE FROM VERANDA OF PORT ORANGE HOUSE

everywhere, and old ones are being replanted, with shipments increasing year by year. There are fine stretches of land where the finest quality of peaches can be grown, and peach culture is receiving more and more attention. Pears, figs, pommegranates, mulberries, blackberries, grapes and other fruit, such as guavas, which cannot be grown north, thrive here. Good fruit land can now be bought at $25.00 an acre; it will be more before long, and the time to buy is now.

Cattle and Poultry. Back of Port Orange, about a mile westward, Mr. W. L. MacDonald owns a cattle and dairy ranch. From him the writer obtained the information bearing on the subject herewith presented.

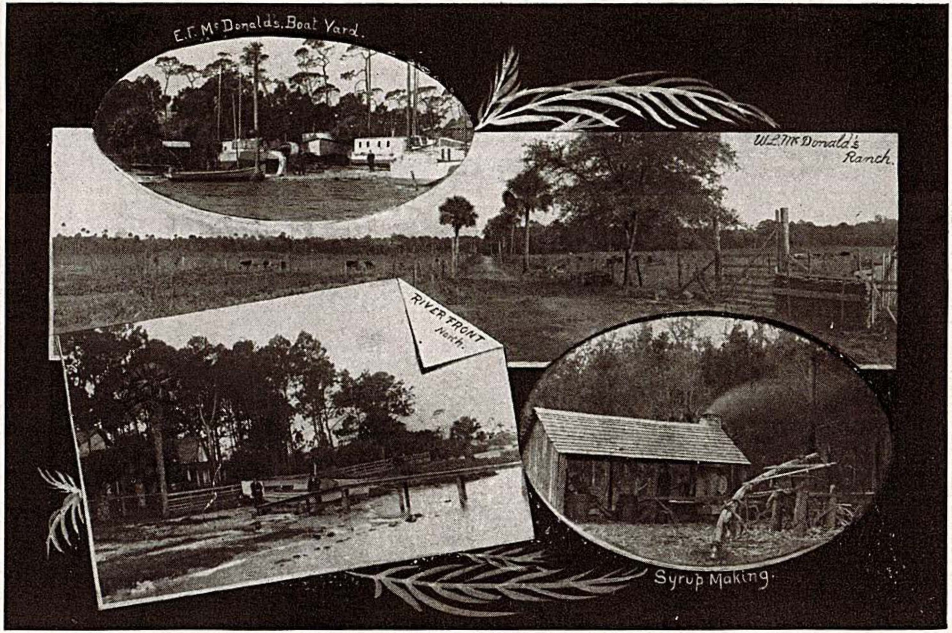
The cattle raised here are for meat and dairy produce. Hotels and boarding houses of nearby cities, as well as private families, absorb the supply readily. Fresh beef is much preferred to storage meat. The stock on this farm is a cross between high class Durham and native cattle, with first-class results in dairy and beef product. Sugar cane grown here, especially the Japanese variety, requires neither cultivation nor irrigation, and produces fine crops. Syrup and sugar extracted from same finds a ready local market. There is not a particle of waste, because cat-

STORE OF MARTIN AND BELLAMY

tle, hogs and sheep feed readily on stalk and blade which is very fattening; and it can be fed green or dry. Velvet beans make excellent stock feed and grow abundantly without cultivation. They enrich the soil surprisingly, drawing from the atmosphere chemical elements much superior to many commercial fertilizers. When plowed under one acre of velvet beans is equal to two tons of blood and bone fertilizer, and far preferable.

Poultry raising can be profitably conducted on local farms. The demand for chickens, turkeys and eggs, is practically unlimited, especially during the winter season, and good prices prevail. Thousands of dollars of poultry product is brought into the state now which could as well be supplied by local farms.

A Seaside Resort. An enterprise, recently completed, is of great importance to Port Orange. A year ago the Port Orange Bridge Company was formed with Mr. Geo. F. Lufberry, B. A. Armstrong, L. O. Smith, S. H. Gove, B. L. Armstrong and Chas. Fozzard as Board of Directors. In December last the bridge across the Halifax River, connecting Port Orange with the Halifax peninsula opposite, was completed at an approximate cost of $22,000. It is 5,050 feet in length, of substantial build, and stands a solid testimonial to the enterprise of



SCENES ABOUT PORT ORANGE

its builders and the confidence they possess in the future of Port Orange.

This bridge brings the people in direct touch with the Atlantic Ocean and its magnificent beach. It opens a new district and splendid possibilities to Port Orange as a seaside resort. It may be a surprise to northern people, but it is nevertheless a fact that the temperature is cooler and the climate more pleasant along the upper Florida sea coast during hot summer months than in the northern states. It is certainly more steady and less variable, and already people from the states immediately to the north of Florida, leave their sweltering homes to enjoy the cooling breezes and pleasant days prevalent along the East Florida Sea Coast. It presents no stretch of the imagination to predict that within ten years there will be a continuous stretch of seaside homes and settlements from Ormond, twelve miles to the north along the beach, through to Seabreeze, Daytona Beach, to and beyond Port Orange southward to the Inlet. There were but a dozen cottages on all this stretch of magnificent ocean beach of twenty miles in 1894; now there is a permanent population of between 700 and 1,000 in the settlements of Seabreeze and Daytona Beach, which is greatly augmented during the winter season by tourists who tax the magnificent hotels and

THE ILLINOIS HOUSE

fine boarding houses to their utmost capacity.

The peninsula opposite Port Orange is in the direct path of this development. The beach, here is a part of that world famous automobile speed course, which draws the wealth and fashion of the country annually to this beach, to witness the unparalleled speed obtained only here, by the best product of auto manufacturers. There is room and opportunity here for a fine seaside hotel, and the builders of seaside cottages and homes. Mr. Geo. F. Lufberry, who owns 240 acres of peninsula property, has deeded one half of this amount, 120 acres, to the Port Orange Bridge Company. This land is surveyed, platted and laid out into streets and lots, and is ready for sale upon the market The writer of this has been informed that every alternate lot of this property will be sold to desirable home builders in the tract at reasonable prices and upon easy terms.

Altogether, whether you look seaward or landward, Port Orange has a splendid future and presents fine opportunities for home seekers. The river with its fine fishing grounds and extensive oyster beds; the peninsula with its splendid ocean beach, fanned by the breath of cooling breezes; with scenery that is a pleasure to the beholder and a joy to the artist, and a climate unequaled anywhere, Port Orange presents itself for consideration.

January, 1907 CHAS. F. BURGMAN.

PRINTED BY THE
PENINSULA PUBLISHING CO.
SEABREEZE, FLORIDA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROXBY
DAYTONA, FLORIDA

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